as the Miao cook tastes something like steamed sawdust. In the lean weeks, before the spring harvest ripens, potatoes form the staple food of large numbers of the people. They can usually afford to have with their meals pounded rock salt purchased from the Chinese, but at times even this becomes a luxury; sometimes so scarce that people fortunate enough to buy it will lick it much as a Western child will lick a barley sugar stick. Being neither handicraftsmen, traders nor shopkeepers, the majority of the Miao are miserably poor. Their laws are those of the Chinese Government, and for money they use whatever is in currency amongst the Chinese. The old men of a neighbourhood are the rulers. One and all clothe themselves with homespun, and it is part of a woman's work to weave all the clothes necessary for herself, her husband and her children. This is no light task. The women have very much more work to do than men. They weave the clothes, carry the water, collect fire-wood, assist in the farm work and bear innumerable children, and so well do they manage this that a majority of the mothers are up and about the house a day after giving birth to a babe. Their clothing is distinct and different from Chinese dress. A man wears sandals, which he himself has made, short trousers reaching down to the knee, and a loose-fitting upper garment which is between a jacket and a gown. For head-dress he wears a turban made of a length of blue or white cloth. The women wear sandals, coloured puttees, and, scorning to wear trousers as Chinese women do,

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634 In order to have his orders carried out, the great chief had
701 at his command all the arms-bearing men in his administrative district, but he was not permitted to abuse his power of command in such a way as to prevent his subjects from earning their livelihood.

622 As has been mentioned, the great chief appointed the
634 village chiefs (šău pă) in the villages under his jurisdiction. Like him, they were appointed for life unless they committed a grave offense. In such cases, the arms-bearing men of the
[692] village brought their complaints against their village chief to
[687] the great chief. The latter investigated the case and appointed another village chief if he felt that there was sufficient justification.

[692] The village chief was, first of all, the judge in all minor
[651] matters. Moreover, he had to collect the taxes for the great chief and see to it that the great chief's orders were carried out. Parallel to the authority of the great chief, the village
[701] chief had at his disposal the arms-bearing men in his village, to whom he gave corresponding orders. Naturally, therefore, the same limitations applied to him as to the great chief.

622 The great chief had four or five officials at his disposal;
624 the village chief had one official. The orders were first of all
634 conveyed to them, and they were called upon for any task that their superior assigned to them. They were paid either by the great chief or by the village chief, depending on who their superior was, from his own pocket. There were no other officials in the true sense of the word.

622 The village chief's income consisted of his share of the
634 aforementioned fines meted out by the great chief, also the
681 fines that the village chief himself imposed in minor cases, and the minor services that the men and women of his village performed voluntarily.

c) Popular Assembly

623 The popular assembly has special importance among the
634 Meau. There are two kinds of popular assemblies.